



ORV News

Addition Lands Planning Continues

The National Park Service continues to work on the General Management Plan for the Big Cypress National Preserve Addition Lands. Preserve staff are in the process of finalizing the preliminary alternatives for the Addition Lands. This fall, a newsletter will be mailed with draft alternatives available for public comment for a period of 90 days. The important point to note about the process at this stage is that these alternatives are meant to give the public a range of choices and options to look at regarding future management of the Addition Lands.

If you are not on the mailing list for the Addition Lands General Management Plan, please contact Damon Doumlele at Big Cypress National Preserve at (239) 695-1158 or by e-mail at Damon_Doumlele@nps.gov. We are interested in your input!

If you have further interest in this and other National Park Service planning efforts, visit the NPS Planning, Environment and Public Comment (PEPC) website at: <http://parkplanning.nps.gov>.

Superintendent's Note

I would like to take this opportunity to introduce myself as the new Superintendent of Big Cypress National Preserve. My name is Karen Gustin and I transferred here in mid May from Pictured Rocks National Lakeshore, which is located on the southern shore of Lake Superior in the Upper Peninsula of Michigan.

Big Cypress is a fantastic place and I am enjoying getting to know the resources and the community very much.

One reason I was interested in Big Cypress was because of the many user groups that visit and recreate here. In addition, I love heat and humidity, and mosquitoes are OK too!

I have been busy these past several months meeting folks and neighbors from the surrounding area and if you are in the area, please stop by and introduce yourself, or give me a call at (239) 695-1103. I look forward to working with you.



NPS Photo

Vehicle Reinspections

There are still many vehicles that have not been reinspected. If you are planning on going out during the hunting season and stopping in to buy your permit, please call to verify if your vehicle needs reinspection. You will not be able to purchase a permit until reinspection is completed. Buggies and 4x4 street legal vehicles will not be re-weighed unless there have been changes that would affect the weight of the vehicle.

Inspections will be conducted at the Oasis Visitor Center area on Friday through Monday, from 8:30 a.m. – 3:00 p.m.. Please call (239) 695-1205 if you have any questions, or to make an appointment.

All land owners must bring in their vehicles for inspection or reinspection. If you use a Special Use Permit to access your property, the vehicle still needs to go through the inspection process.

Titling ATVs

The Florida Off-Highway Vehicle Titling Act, passed by the 2002 Florida State Legislature, requires that All Terrain Vehicles (ATVs) sold in Florida and operated on public lands be titled to allow for easy determination of ownership.

If you own an ATV that requires a title, you can apply at local tax collector or tag and title offices in your community for a certificate of title. If the vehicle was recently purchased through a dealership, the dealer is required by law to apply for the title, if you carry a lien. Once the dealer files the application for title, the lien holder will hold the title, and the purchaser receive a copy of the application for title.

A copy of your title, or application for title (FDOT Form 82041), needs to be submitted when you permit your ATV for use within the preserve. You will not be able to purchase a permit without the appropriate documents. If you submitted a copy of your title when purchasing your 2005 permit, you do not have to submit it again.

Soon, the Florida State Department of Transportation will be implementing a title decal program. To keep abreast of changes related to the Florida State Off-Highway Vehicle Titling program, visit http://www.hsmv.state.fl.us/html/atv_instruct1.htm.

ORVs DEFINED

Street Legal 4 x 4s – Street-legal four-wheel drive ORVs and trucks that are commercially manufactured and sold. They must be currently registered with the state and not be modified in any way that would be illegal for street operation.

All-Terrain Cycles (ATCs) – Small, commercially manufactured, motorized ATCs, 50 inches or less in width, having a dry weight of 900 pounds or less, designed to travel on three or more low-pressure tires, having a seat designed to be straddled by the operator and handlebars for steering control, and intended for use by a single operator. A passenger can be carried if the manufacturer has designed and certified the ATC for such use.

Swamp Buggies – Swamp buggies include a wide variety of custom-designed and built vehicles. These vehicles have a wide range of configurations based on the frames, engines, number of axles, and wheel sizes used. Their weights range up to 7,160 pounds with an average of 3,629 pounds. These vehicles are not street-legal.

Airboats – Airboats can be commercially manufactured or custom-designed and built. Airboats consist of a shallow, rectangular, aluminum hull powered by an aircraft or automobile engine that drives a large aircraft propeller.

Any vehicle type not listed above cannot currently be approved for use in the Preserve. As we continue to implement the adaptive management aspect of the ORV



National Park Service
U.S. Department of the Interior

Big Cypress National Preserve
33100 Tamiami Trail East
Ochopee, FL 34141

Phone
Toll-free 24 Hour Emergency
(800) 788-0511 - or -
#NPS on your cell phone

Oasis Visitor Center
(239) 695-1201
ORV Office
(239) 695-1205
Hunting Information
(239) 695-2040
Report hunting violations immediately to
(800) 788-0511

Website
www.nps.gov/bicy/
Florida State
Hunting Information
www.myfwc.com

The National Park Service cares for the special places saved by the American people so that all may experience our heritage.

Management Plan, it will provide a mechanism to consider inclusion of new vehicle types that come on the market. If you have a question or suggestion about a particular vehicle type, please contact Ed Clark, Chief Ranger at (239) 695-1108.

For specific information regarding required equipment on each ORV type, please refer to the 2000 ORV Plan which can be found on the "Management Documents" page of the Big Cypress website - www.nps.gov/bicy.

Proper Trail Names

Buckskin and Monument By-pass Trails will now be referred to as Monroe North Trail and Sandy Road Trail, respectively. Future trail name designations will coincide with names identified on USGS maps.

CAMPGROUND NEWS

Midway Campground to Open in December

Midway Campground improvements are anticipated to be complete by December 1, 2005, the typical opening date for the facility. Completion of this project was delayed for several reasons, including the cost and difficulty in getting materials and the disruption of preserve-wide closures last summer due to hurricanes.

When completed, the improved facility will have concrete pads and electrical hookups at each RV site, a tent camping area, day-use picnic area, comfort stations with running water, dump station, and a paved road through the entire facility. The area also includes a privacy buffer between the campground and US 41.

Once the campground is re-opened, fees will be

charged for overnight stays. Midway will have a camping fee of \$16.00 per night for tent sites and \$19.00 for RV sites. If you have a Federal Public Lands Golden Age Passport or Golden Access Passport, the fees are \$8.00 for tent sites and \$10.00 for RV sites.

Monument Lake Campground fees will continue to be \$16.00 for tent and RV campers, and with a Golden Age Passport or Golden Access Passport, \$8.00.

The use of the dump stations at Midway Campground and Dona Drive is free to campers from Midway and Monument Lake Campgrounds, and \$6.00 for others.

Camping in the Hunting Season

Except for the period and location indicated below, no camping gear can be left in the backcountry when the user is not actively camping and staying overnight at the campsite. Permanent structures, clearing or leveling of sites is not permitted at any time.

An individual may camp or leave camping gear unattended in backcountry areas of the preserve, except for Zone 4, including the designated sites in the Bear Island campground, and the Gator Pit and Pink Jeep Trail campsites, for the length of the specific hunting season as follows:

1. Archery Season,
September 3 – October 2
2. Muzzle loading Season,
October 8 – October 23
3. General Gun Season,
November 12 – January 1
4. Spring Turkey Season,
March 4 – April 9

Individuals occupying a site may

bring camping equipment into the preserve after 8:00 a.m. one day before the opening of the specific season and must remove camping equipment from the preserve before 6:00 p.m. one day after the above stated season ends. In the Bear Island Unit property may be left unattended only at designated campsites. Individuals who leave their camping equipment for longer than 24 hours must leave identification (name, address, telephone number) clearly visible on the camp gear.

Backcountry camping in the Bear Island Unit is permitted only at designated campsites.

In Zone 4: airboat users must camp in designated campsites

only (1-17); backcountry camping is allowed in other areas of Zone 4 (except the seaside sparrow closure area) when access is gained by foot or non-motorized vessel, and the campsite is located at least 1/2 mile from the Loop road and 1/4 mile from any designated campsite or airboat trail; no personal property can be left in the backcountry (tents, grills, cookware, tables, bedding, etc.) anywhere in Zone 4 when the user is not actively camping and staying overnight at the campsite.



NPS Photo



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U.S. Department of the Interior

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This publication was paid for, in part,
through the generous donations from
the visitors to Big Cypress National
Preserve.

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Big Cypress National Preserve ORV News

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2005 06 ORV news.indd/8-2005/2500 copies

REPORT WILDFIRES

To report any fire activity in the preserve, call Everglades National Park dispatch at 1-800-788-0511 or #NPS on your cell phone. Do not put yourself at risk by attempting to put a wildfire out. The Big Cypress National Preserve fire crew will extinguish the fire using appropriate safety equipment and tools.

Private property owners in the preserve must obtain a burn permit prior to setting fires on their property. A burn permit can be obtained by calling (239) 695-9280 ext 22.



Photo by - Ralph Arwood